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19 May 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Training

THROUGH : Chief, Operations School

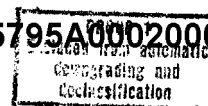
SUBJECT : Course Report - Covert Action Operations Seminar
No. 1, 7 - 10 May 1967

REFERENCE : A. Covert Action Seminar - Memorandum for
Director of Training, dated 21 March 1967
B. Preparations for Seminar - Memorandum for
Guest Speakers, Covert Action Seminar,
dated 3 April 1967

1. Summary:

Seventeen officers of the Clandestine Services were enrolled in the first running of the new Covert Action Operations Seminar, held at [REDACTED], 7 - 10 May 1967. The Seminar was audited by [REDACTED]. The Director of Training also audited the course and contributed to certain of the panel discussions. The students ranged in grade from GS-07 to GS-15, with an average grade of 12.5. There should have been better representation of operational units, however. This class included officers from: CI Staff (1), CA Staff (3), WH (1), [REDACTED] (2), TSD (3), and FE (7). Eleven guest speakers made presentations of topics and participated in panel discussions. Sessions were intensive and three evening group discussions were held, two of them of three hours' duration each. The Seminar focused on the integration of Clandestine Services' operations and on problems peculiar to Covert Action activities. The Seminar was well received by the students as reflected in their participation in class discussion and their oral and written critiques. Guest participants also expressed their approval, inter alia, by suggesting that they wished to attend all sessions of subsequent runnings of the Seminar. Certain suggestions made by students and guests will be incorporated in Covert Action Operations Seminar No. 2, to be held 25 - 28 June 1967. These will be explained below in the body of the Course Report.

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2. Course Format and Content:

The origins of this course, its scope and aims are explained in Reference A. Briefly, the course is intended as the core course of a new cycle of Covert Action training designed to meet needs as expressed in a meeting with senior operating division personnel, chaired by the Deputy Chief, CA Staff, 6 February 1967. The Deputy Chief,

CA Staff, were especially helpful in planning the course, reviewing two draft syllabi and making many valuable suggestions.

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3. The aim of the course, and of the proposed cycle of CA training, is to provide job performance oriented instruction for middle-grade and senior officers engaged in conducting, supporting or supervising CA activities, as well as, orientation on CA problems to other experienced officers who need such information.

4. The course format of the Covert Action Operations Seminar was designed as a series of group discussions. Guests were provided Reference B, an outline of course objectives and general content, to assist them in planning their presentations. To maintain the pace of group participation, three hours were planned by the undersigned and interspersed amid guest speakers: one hour used Vu-Graph models to relate concepts of perception to the problems of identifying characteristics of the developing areas; one hour employed Vu-Graphs to illustrate the importance of sourcing to the impact and direction of CS propaganda efforts; and the third hour was centered on an exercise in the assessment of recruitment targets for covert action activities. Also, a panel presentation on the comparison of operations in various sized stations was arranged mid-way through the first day as a change of pace. Two evening panel-led group summing up discussions were also arranged. To intensify group interest and participation in the discussions on propaganda operations, film presentations were added to the lectures and the students

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25X1A9a 5. Judging from the classroom response of students and from oral and written comments, the totality of the format succeeded in obtaining the objective of a fast-paced, high intensity group participation course. One student's comments indicated a direct hit on this target. The student wrote, "Great course. The range, variety and quality of the speakers were universally excellent. Each of the three days had a slightly different quality to it which, I think is indicative of the elusiveness of CA generally. Highlights were two evening sessions, the interludes where the Instructor attempted to evoke right thinking (they were offbeat and generally refreshing) [REDACTED] part where we were forced to give the elements of a [REDACTED]. Not all comments were so clear, however. Agreement that the evening sessions were highlights was unanimous. Some found the undersigned's efforts too "theoretical", however. Some did not find [REDACTED] excellent effort completely satisfying. But, on the other hand, several requested an expansion of the undersigned's exercise in recruitment, and there was unanimous agreement that the cross-fertilization of information in panel-led discussion was of great value. The only strong suggestion for changes was a call from a number of students for a longer course. This call came particularly from those who apparently felt the course of greatest value such as the student who commented "I enjoyed the course and got more out of it than any other Agency training course I have attended." These persons would like to see the course extended by an additional evening, or even an additional day, not to add new topics but to expand on those covered a bit further and to allow for more frequent summing ups. One student noted, however, that he would have liked more "nuts and bolts" and another more specifically suggested material on tradecraft.

25X1A9a 6. Course content, as explained in the forward of the course schedule, (See Attachment B), was organized in five general blocks; first, an explanation of the rationale of covert action activities; second, an analysis of ideological, geographical and human targets; third, an explanation of the major kinds of covert action operational activities; fourth, a study of examples of major covert action efforts, and fifth, a brief summary of expert and support capabilities.

7. The central themes of the course were three. The principal of these stressed the integrated nature of Clandestine Services' operations and covert action's place in such integrated activity. Next in importance

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was the theme that covert action operations require particular attention to a proper selection of goals and means -- appropriateness of the action. The third theme was that there are certain distinctive trade-craft elements in handling covert action operations, the most important of which is the mutual interest collaborator, who replaces the classic principal agent as the key figure in operations. These points were made and the major thrust of the course was established by contrasting and sharing experiences of the speakers, who represented great variety and depth of operational background, with the students and among the speakers themselves in the panels and group discussions.

8. Speakers:

As already noted, the speakers represented a wide variety of operational experience, had obviously read the course syllabus, and were all highly articulate individuals. Also, as noted above, their presentations were uniformly well received. Particularly important was the interplay of strongly-held views that were expressed, always well supported by excellent concrete examples and, perhaps, even more propitious was the dovetailing of divergent specific views in supporting and emphasizing the aforementioned major themes of the course.

9. Students:

The students unanimously agreed in their written comments and in informal discussion that they found the course of value. As noted above, classroom participation reflected this as well. The group represented a considerable amount of Agency experience. Unfortunately, the group did not represent a varied selection of area division operational talent. FE Division sent seven persons. Of all other divisions, WH was represented by only one officer. One of the FE officers, however, was new to that division and had some years of both desk and field experience in Africa. Several senior officers from CA Staff and one senior CI officer added important operational background to the student group. [REDACTED] was represented by two senior air operations officers with field experience, and the roster was completed by three TSD personnel. All of the TSD personnel are engaged in support of CA activities and were interested participants, but their contributions to the class were perforce minimal. The women officers had both held field assignments. The more experienced of the two contributed usefully to class discussions. The other, who is going on field assignment as a covert actions support assistant, stated she had benefited from the class.

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10. Comments and Recommendations:

25X1A6a The level of participation by the class, the excellence of presentations, the sparkle of interchanges among the speakers, and the widely expressed enthusiasm of all involved were highly satisfying. The course has been well launched. The physical environment and the support provided [REDACTED] contributed markedly to the success of the course.

25X1A 11. Both the May and June runnings of the Seminar are conceived to be pilot courses. For this reason and profiting from comments and impressions garnered from the first experience, certain modifications are recommended for the June Seminar. The initial evening session on Sunday, 25 June, will be expanded beyond the scope of general introduction of the course and of the class and guest participants. In addition to these, a firm statement will be made of the major themes to set the stage for their subsequent absorption. The Africa Division form [REDACTED] will be distributed and briefly explained. The students will be urged to be prepared with proposals for discussion. The list of recruitment targets will be distributed and briefly explained, and the students will be urged to be prepared to consider subsequent specific recruitment problems. These changes are responsive to suggestions and are designed to initiate both discussion in some depth of the course purposes the first evening, and to prepare for greater exploitation of the two exercises, expanding thereby the "nuts and bolts" and tradecraft aspects of the course. However, on this latter point, the class will be explicitly reminded that the seminar is based on the assumption that all participants are experienced and need no extensive tradecraft instruction or review.

25X1A9a 12. The theoretical material presented by the undersigned will be considerably modified. The hour on developing areas will be eliminated as such. It is hoped that [REDACTED] can be persuaded to participate to replace this, in part, and that [REDACTED] 25X1A [REDACTED] can participate and lead a discussion on institution building operations. A new and significant interchange of ideas will thus ensue. [REDACTED] specifically stressed his desire to see the institution building problem treated in some detail, both because of the

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importance of clarifying this matter and because a considerable amount of the covert action effort of FE Division is involved in this field. FE Division will also make available an interesting, just completed, film of activities in Laos bearing on this general topic.

13. Suggestions that the course be lengthened will not be adopted in the belief that it is an important measure of the success of the first running of the Seminar that so many persons felt the desire for "one more evening." The course is better left to impart this feeling rather than lengthened to convey perhaps the opposite impression. There will be added, however, statements of summary at the end of each day's sessions and again at the conclusion of the final session. Finally, it is recommended that efforts be made to expand area division representation among the student body and that, to this end, if necessary, TSD, [REDACTED] and other participants not directly involved in operations be limited by whatever quotas required to insure a preponderance of varied area division representation.

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Chief Instructor

Attachments: (w/orig. only)

- A. Student Roster
- B. Course Schedule

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HT/OS/TR/[REDACTED]:dk

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ORIGINAL DOCUMENT MISSING PAGE(S):

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